

**CLAIMS:**

1. A method of operating a drain pump in a laundry washing machine during the drain phase of the wash cycle to reduce pump blockages comprising the steps of:
  - (a) starting the pump and running it for a first period of time to produce a discharge of a given flow rate,
  - (b) stopping the pump rapidly and leaving the pump stopped for a second period of time which is less than 10% of said first period of time, and
  - (c) repeating steps (a) and (b) for the duration of said drain phase, said second period of time being such that the flow rate reduces substantially to zero.
2. A method according to claim 1, wherein said second period of time is between 10% and 1% of said first period of time.
3. A method according to claim 2, wherein the first period of time is approximately 10 seconds and the second period of time is approximately 200 milliseconds.
4. A method according to claim 3, wherein said pump is driven by an AC induction motor, during said first period of time said motor is supplied with full wave alternating current and during said second period of time is supplied with half wave alternating current.
5. A laundry washing machine including a drain pump operated in accordance with the method of claim 4.
6. A laundry washing machine including a drain pump operated in accordance with the method of claim 3.
7. A method according to claim 3, wherein said pump is driven by an AC induction motor, during said first period of time said motor is supplied with full wave alternating current and during said second period of time is supplied with half wave alternating current.

8. A laundry washing machine including a drain pump operated in accordance with the method of claim 7.

9. A laundry washing machine including a drain pump operated in accordance with the method of claim 3.

5 10. A method according to claim 1, wherein the first period of time is approximately 10 seconds and the second period of time is approximately 200 milliseconds.

11. A method according to claim 10, wherein said pump is driven by an AC induction motor, during said first period of time said motor is supplied with full wave alternating current and during said second period of time is supplied with half wave alternating current.

10 12. A laundry washing machine including a drain pump operated in accordance with the method of claim 11.

13. A laundry washing machine including a drain pump operated in accordance with the method of claim 10.

15 14. A method according to claim 1, wherein said pump is driven by an AC induction motor, during said first period of time said motor is supplied with full wave alternating current and during said second period of time is supplied with half wave alternating current.

15. A laundry washing machine including a drain pump operated in accordance with the method of claim 14.

20 16. A laundry washing machine including a drain pump operated in accordance with the method of claim 1.

17. A method of operating a drain pump in a laundry washing machine during the drain phase of the wash cycle to reduce pump blockages comprising the steps of:

(a) starting the pump and running it for a first period of time to produce a discharge of a given flow rate,

(b) stopping the pump for a second period of time which is less than 10% of said first period of time, said second period of time being such that the flow rate reduces substantially to zero, and

(c) repeating steps (a) and (b) for the duration of said drain phase.

18. A method according to claim 17, wherein said second period of time is between 10% and 1% of said first period of time.

19. A method according to claim 18, wherein the first period of time is approximately 10 seconds and the second period of time is approximately 200 milliseconds.

20. A method according to claim 19, wherein said pump is driven by an AC induction motor, during said first period of time said motor is supplied with full wave alternating current and during said second period of time is supplied with half wave alternating current.

21. A laundry washing machine including a drain pump operated in accordance with the method of claim 20.

22. A laundry washing machine including a drain pump operated in accordance with the method of claim 19.

23. A method according to claim 18, wherein said pump is driven by an AC induction motor, during said first period of time said motor is supplied with full wave alternating current and during said second period of time is supplied with half wave alternating current.

24. A laundry washing machine including a drain pump operated in accordance with the method of claim 23.

25. A laundry washing machine including a drain pump operated in accordance with the

method of claim 18.

26. A method according to claim 17, wherein the first period of time is approximately 10 seconds and the second period of time is approximately 200 milliseconds.

27. A method according to claim 26, wherein said pump is driven by an AC induction motor, during said first period of time said motor is supplied with full wave alternating current and during said second period of time is supplied with half wave alternating current.

28. A laundry washing machine including a drain pump operated in accordance with the method of claim 27.

29. A laundry washing machine including a drain pump operated in accordance with the method of claim 26.

30. A method according to claim 17, wherein said pump is driven by an AC induction motor, during said first period of time said motor is supplied with full wave alternating current and during said second period of time is supplied with half wave alternating current.

31. A laundry washing machine including a drain pump operated in accordance with the method of claim 30.

32. A laundry washing machine including a drain pump operated in accordance with the method of claim 17.